POL 14 Viet S
XR POL 15-2 Viet S

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CONFIDENTIAL 553

R 6-3-71 Saigon 8685

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ACTION EA-20

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-08 L-04 NSAE-00
NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-12 UPW-01 IO-16
AID-28 RSR-01 /133 W

R 031140Z JUN 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5619
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG
USDEL FRANCE
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR 022545
REVIEWED BY Joan Szentes DATE 1/26/82
RDS or XD EXT DATE
TS AUTH. EXEMPTION(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS
DECLASSIFIED RELEASABLE
RELEASE DENIED NGO CONG DUC
PA OF FOI EXEMPTIONS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8685

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE CALLS ON EXECUTIVE TO RELEASE DEPUTY NGO CONG DUC

REF: A. SAIGON 8626 - POL 14 Viet S XR POL 15-2 Viet S
B. SAIGON 8531 - POL 15-2 Viet S XR POL 12 Viet S

1. FOLLOWING VOTE JUNE 3 ON PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION BILL (SEPTEL) LOWER HOUSE TOOK UP ARREST OF DEPUTY NGO CONG DUC, AND A MAJORITY OF 91 QUICKLY VOTED TO CALL ON EXECUTIVE TO CEASE DETENTION AND PROSECUTION OF DUC IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 37 (3) OF CONSTITUTION. (THIS ARTICLE PROVIDES THAT IN CASES OF FLAGRANTE DELICTO, WHICH IS BASIS ON WHICH DUC WAS ARRESTED, PROSECUTION OR DETENTION OF DEPUTIES AND SENATORS MUST CEASE IF HOUSE CONCERNED SO DECIDES.) WE HAVE NO WORD YET ON DUC'S RELEASE.

2. DURING DISCUSSION OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION BILL OPPOSITION DEPUTIES ALLEGED THAT PRO-GOVERNMENT DEPUTY LE TAI HOA AND PRESIDENTIAL AIDE NGUYEN VAN NGAN HAD OFFERED TO FREE DUC IF OPPOSITION SOCIETY BLOC WOULD SUPPORT ENDORSEMENT PROVISION.

(3)

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OPPOSITION ASSERTED THIS OFFER MADE IT CLEAR DUC HAD BEEN ARRESTED AS PART OF A POLITICAL PLOT.

3. REF B REPORTED THAT LH AGREED JUNE 1 TO SEND A DELEGATION OF DEPUTIES THAT AFTERNOON TO VINH BINH TO INVESTIGATE. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE PROMISED TO FLY THE DELEGATION DOWN, BUT LATER INDICATED PLANE HAD ENGINE TROUBLE AND NONE OTHER WAS AVAILABLE BECAUSE OF MILITARY REQUIREMENTS. OPPOSITION DEPUTIES HAVE NOT FAILED TO EXPLOIT THIS INCIDENT.

4. VARIOUS SOURCES STATE HELICOPTER SUPPLIED BY VICE PRESIDENT KY TOOK LEFTIST LAWYERS TRAN NGOC LIE Y AND BUI CHANG THOI TO VINH BINH AFTERNOON OF JUNE 1. PROSECUTOR OF LOCAL COURT REPORTEDLY TOLD THEM DUC WOULD BE TRIED JUNE 8 AND REFUAED TO FREE DUC PENING TRIAL.

5. PROVINCE SENIOR ADVISOR IN VINH BINH REPORTS THAT PUBLIC OPINION THERE SUPPORTS DUC'S CLAIM THAT INCIDENT IS PART OF A GOVERNMENT PLOT TO HAVE HIM DISQUALIFIED AS A CANDIDATE FOR LOWER HOUSE.

6. PRESUMED PRESIDENTIAL CHALLENGER DUONG VAN MINH IS CITED IN TODAY'S PAPERS AS CAUTIOUSLY STATING THAT IF GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HANDLE MATTER CAREFULLY PEOPLE WILL THINK IT WAS A PLOT TO DESTROY OPPOSITION BEFORE ELECTIONS.

7. OPPOSITION DAILIES HAVE EDITORIALIZED ALONG PREDICTABLE LINES, ALLEGING INCIDENT DEMONSTRATES BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY ARE NOT BEING RESPECTED IN VIET-NAM, AND THAT EXECUTIVE WILL NOT STOP AT VIOLENT TO WIN IN FORTHCOMING ELECTION.
BUNKER